

Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency

# Weather Advisory Group Standard Operating Guide

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Annex to the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan

**GEMA/HS Meteorologist**

**4/13/2017**



## Approval and Implementation

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Transmitted herewith is the updated Weather Advisory Group Standard Operating Procedure. This document supersedes the Weather Advisory Group Standard Operating Procedure dated January 29, 2015 and any/all previous Weather Advisory Group Standard Operating Procedures and Standard Operating Guidelines promulgated by the State of Georgia for this purpose. It provides a framework in which the agencies of the State of Georgia can plan and perform their respective emergency functions during a weather-related disaster or emergency. It will be revised and updated as required in the future. All recipients are requested to advise the Director of the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency of any changes which might result in its improvement or increase its usefulness.

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## Executive Summary

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This document is designed to meet Federal Emergency Management Agency standards, Emergency Management Accreditation Program standards, National Incident Management System requirements, and is compliant with the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan. This document also meets the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and provides instruction on properly converting a word document to a portable document format (PDF) to make it accessible under the ADA. To best understand all references to formatting instructions contained herein, this document should be read digitally (on a computer) rather than in a printed version.

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## Record of Distribution

Plan #	Office/Department	Representative	Signature

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## 1.0 Introduction

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### 1.1 Purpose

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Weather Advisory Groups exist to provide a collaborative, impacts-based forecast to the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) and other State decision-makers in the event of weather that poses a significant threat to Georgia.

### 1.2 Scope

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Weather Advisory Groups include meteorologists and weather forecasters from an area's major network affiliates along with the National Weather Service. Members of a Weather Advisory Group include well-established, trusted, and experienced television meteorologists from major network affiliates, as well as meteorologists from the nearest National Weather Service Forecast Office(s).

### 1.3 Policy/Authority

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Authority to develop this guide is given to the planning section as part of its duties under the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan (GEOP) and by the Authority of the Deputy Director of Emergency Management.

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## 2.0 Situation Overview

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### 2.1 Creation of the Metro Atlanta Weather Advisory Group

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- A) In 2014, Georgia Governor Nathan Deal established the Metro Atlanta Weather Advisory Group, which includes meteorologists and weather forecasters from Atlanta's four major network affiliates along with National Weather Service Atlanta.
  - 1. During the storm event week of February 10-13, the Metro Atlanta Weather Advisory Group was activated and provided expert consultation to GEMA/HS.
    - a) The group's efforts significantly benefitted public information efforts and the understanding of the predicted weather situation.
- B) These professionals should continue to be fully involved as decisions are considered and implemented.

### 2.2 Expansion of Additional Weather Advisory Groups

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- A) In order to provide similar decision support capabilities for all of Georgia, two additional Weather Advisory Groups were created.
  - 1. These Weather Advisory Groups are to be utilized for weather events that occur in:
    - a) Central and South Georgia
    - b) Coastal Georgia



## 3.0 PROCEDURE

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### 3.1 Responsibilities of Weather Advisory Group Members

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#### A) **Activation of a Weather Advisory Group**

1. The GEMA/HS Meteorologist will activate the appropriate Weather Advisory Group(s) for the respective area(s) where dangerous weather could make an impact.

#### B) **Participation in a Weather Advisory Group**

1. Members of the activated Weather Advisory Group(s) are requested to respond via email regularly while the threat/event exists.
  - a) Though email should be the primary form of communication, if a conference call is deemed appropriate, Weather Advisory Group members are requested to make every effort to participate on the call.
    - 1) The goal of the Weather Advisory Group conversations is not necessarily to reach a consensus forecast among all members – though that is ideal, it is unrealistic.
    - 1) The primary goal of Weather Advisory Group conversations is to have a collaborative discussion regarding the impacts of weather upon Georgia, which will provide GEMA/HS and other State decision-makers with a basis for their decisions.
  - b) Each Weather Advisory Group member is requested to have an alternate contact from his or her station or office to participate, on the chance that the primary Weather Advisory Group member is unable to participate when requested.
    - 1) If a Weather Advisory Group member is off-duty, he or she is not responsible for participating in the Weather Advisory Group conversations.
    - 1) In the case that he or she cannot participate, the alternate contact for the station or office is requested to participate in his or her place until he or she is able to participate.

#### C) **Deactivation of a Weather Advisory Group**

1. When consensus exists that the threat or event is over for all of Georgia, the GEMA/HS Meteorologist will deactivate the Weather Advisory Group.
  - a) If multiple Weather Advisory Groups are activated, the GEMA/HS Meteorologist will deactivate each Weather Advisory Group when appropriate for the respective portions of Georgia.

## 4.0 Weather Advisory Group Members

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### 4.1 Metro Atlanta Weather Advisory Group

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#### A) Primary Contacts

1. GEMA/HS Meteorologist Will Lanxton
2. National Weather Service Atlanta Meteorologist Keith Stellman
3. 11 Alive Meteorologist Chesley McNeil
4. CBS 46 Chief Meteorologist Jim Kosek
5. Fox 5 Chief Meteorologist David Chandley
6. WSB-TV Chief Meteorologist Glenn Burns

#### B) Alternate Contacts

1. GEMA/HS Director Homer Bryson
2. National Weather Service Atlanta Meteorologist David Nadler
3. 11 Alive Chief Meteorologist Chris Holcomb
4. CBS 46 Meteorologist Jim Loznicka
5. Fox 5 Meteorologist Joanne Feldman
6. WSB-TV Meteorologist Brad Nitz

### 4.2 Central and South Georgia Weather Advisory Group

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#### A) Primary Contacts

1. GEMA/HS Meteorologist Will Lanxton
2. National Weather Service Tallahassee Meteorologist Jane Hollingsworth
3. WTVM Columbus Chief Meteorologist Derek Kinkade
4. WMAZ Macon Chief Meteorologist Ben Jones
5. WCTV Tallahassee Chief Meteorologist Mike McCall

### 4.3 Coastal Georgia Weather Advisory Group

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#### A) **Primary Contacts**

1. GEMA/HS Meteorologist Will Lanxton
2. National Weather Service Charleston Meteorologist Mike Emlaw
3. National Weather Service Jacksonville Meteorologist Scott Cordero
4. WTOC Savannah Chief Meteorologist John Wetherbee
5. WTEV/WAWS Jacksonville Chief Meteorologist Mike Buresh